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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 000943

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USUN FOR AMB KHALILZAD

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [AU](#) [UN](#) [SU](#) [US](#)
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR AMB KHALILZAD VISIT TO SUDAN

Classified By: CDA A. Fernandez, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) In keeping with the last twenty years of the bilateral relationship, the USG continues to use three instruments to implement our policy in Sudan: sanctions, humanitarian and development assistance, and diplomacy. An end to the crisis in Darfur is being pursued along two policy tracks--peace-keeping and the political process. The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) is on the verge of collapse, and a peace-keeping operation cannot continue beyond June without UN command and control--and financing. Though the Sudanese Government has signaled a willingness to accept some percentage of non-African forces, the practicalities of the force composition and UN command and control must be more fully defined. While the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) moves forward with a conference in Southern Sudan to prepare the Darfur rebel factions for peace negotiations, the UN/AU political process is stalled. The UN and African Union (AU) still lack a specific strategy to advance the peace process and should focus on the development of a precise plan for the negotiation phase. Resolving the impasses on peace-keeping and political dialogue will be critical to addressing the dire humanitarian situation in Darfur, despite the recent agreement with the Sudanese Government to ease bureaucratic obstacles to aid operations. End summary.

The Bilateral Relationship

¶2. (C) In the last twenty years, the USG has used three instruments to implement its policy in Sudan: sanctions, humanitarian and development assistance, and diplomacy. U.S. sanctions were first imposed after the current regime seized power in a military coup in 1989. The goal was to incite Sudan to change the tenor of its policies, and they remain in place because of the ongoing tragedy in Darfur.

¶3. (C) Simultaneous to these economic sanctions, Sudan is the third largest recipient of U.S. economic assistance, after Iraq and Afghanistan. The initial funding was for humanitarian operations. While, this type of aid is still the principal form of assistance to Darfur, U.S. programs in Southern Sudan are shifting toward economic development and reconstruction.

¶4. (C) Diplomacy has been the third instrument of our policy in Sudan. Four years of intensive U.S. engagement culminated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which envisioned both an end to the North/South civil war and the reform of governmental institutions. Similar engagement with the Sudanese Government--in this instance through intelligence

cooperation--has proved vital in the Global War on Terror. Since the re-opening of a skeletal Embassy led by a Charge d'Affaires in 2004, the U.S. Mission in Sudan has bulked up its staff and added a Consulate General in Juba and forward operating facilities in Darfur. The current downward trajectory of the bilateral relationship, however, threatens to reverse these steps.

¶15. (C) Improved bilateral relations are not the goal of U.S. policy in Sudan. Yet continued engagement with the Sudanese Government is necessary to achieve our goals: an end to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, a sustainable peace in the South, and burgeoning democratic institutions throughout the country.

Darfur: Peace-Keeping

¶16. (C) The crisis in Darfur is rooted in long-standing grievances that cannot be addressed in the current security environment. An effective cease-fire and an international peace-keeping force capable of ensuring stability are necessary to allow a political solution to take hold. AMIS, however, is on the verge of collapse. The African Union cannot continue to finance a peace-keeping mission, and the current AU force is under siege and well below the size necessary to provide security. A peace-keeping mission in Darfur will not continue beyond June without Sudanese acceptance of UN command and control of a hybrid UN/AU peace-keeping mission, concrete agreement on the size of a hybrid force, and a commitment to accept some non-African forces.

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¶17. (C) Though the Sudanese Government appears to have reached agreement on the UN/AU hybrid force during the recent meeting of the Tripartite Commission in Addis Ababa June 11-12, it must fully clarify its position on UN command and control and the composition of the force to account for realistic troop contributions. The UN Force Commander should assume full operational command and control. The Force Commander must respond to a UN mandate and apply UN systems in operating the force. It will be difficult to secure more than 60 percent of the total personnel from within Africa, and other countries will have to contribute as much as 40 percent of the force. The Sudanese Government has supposedly accepted some non-African participation in the hybrid operation, but its position must be more fully defined.

Darfur: Political Process

¶18. (C) The SPLM is moving forward with a conference in Southern Sudan to prepare the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) non-signatories for negotiation. Though the SPLM effort has lacked focus, the recent engagement of SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum has brought much-needed clarity to the process. The SPLM has developed a three-phased approach to the conference: 1) A meeting of traditional leaders and civil society activists from Darfur, 2) A dialogue between DPA signatories and non-signatories; and 3) Preparation for the non-signatories to participate in negotiations. While the conference is scheduled to begin on June 18, participation of core political and military actors from Darfur is unconfirmed. It is likely that participants will trickle down to Southern Sudan over the coming weeks. The SPLM has requested approximately 1.3 million dollars in donor support for the conference. To date, the U.S. and Norway have each proposed approximately 150,000 dollars in assistance.

¶19. (C) Meanwhile, the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD) is working to organize a conference in Nairobi for the representatives of the numerous factions of the Sudan

Liberation Army (SLA). The SPLM supports this meeting and members of the SPLM Taskforce on Darfur will attend. The meeting will focus on bringing greater organization within the SLA in preparation for the SPLM conference and an eventual negotiating process. The UN/AU have given tacit endorsement to CHD, which is awaiting final approval from the Kenyan Government to proceed.

¶10. (C) The UN/AU initiative on the political process is stagnating. In the absence of a specific UN/AU strategy for the political process, other international efforts continue to complicate the field. A "regional initiative" involving Chad, Eritrea, and Libya seems poised to compete with UN/AU mediation. While these governments should play a part in the political process given their leverage over the Darfur rebel factions--largely thanks to their logistical support for the plethora of armed groups--they cannot serve as impartial mediators and succeed in bringing the DPA non-signatories to a deal with the Sudanese Government.

¶11. (C) The UN/AU should move forward as quickly as possible to develop its strategy for the negotiation phase of the political process. A UN/AU strategy will show the Sudanese Government--and its backers such as China--that the international community is serious about both an effective political process and an effective peacekeeping operation for Darfur. This strategy will also hold the Sudanese Government accountable to its commitment to support the UN/AU lead and engage in serious negotiations with the non-signatories. We should encourage the UN/AU to avoid formal talks between the non-signatories and the Sudanese Government. The DPA does not need to be substantively re-negotiated. Instead, mediators could shuttle between the Darfur rebel movements, the Sudanese Government, and the DPA signatories to build consensus on a few key issues, such as compensation and power-sharing.

¶12. (C) The international community should bolster the sole rebel signatory of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) led by Minni Minawi. Minawi's decision to sign the DPA one year ago has left him a beleaguered partner in the Government with few tangible benefits for his people. While he continues to be marginalized in Khartoum, Minawi's support in Darfur has plummeted. His control over his forces in Darfur is weak, and he has been unable to discourage some of his fighters from banditry and open confrontation with AMIS. Non-signatory movements will only participate in a constructive political process if they can witness the benefits of peace.

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Darfur: Humanitarian

¶13. (C) Addressing the humanitarian situation remains the USG's top priority. With the rise of intra-tribal fighting and banditry, overcoming the impasses on political dialogue and an effective peace-keeping operation are essential for aid operations to continue. The March 28 agreement with the Sudanese government to ease bureaucratic restrictions on aid operations in Darfur was a breakthrough. The agreement provides specific benchmarks to monitor implementation through a High Level Committee. To ensure that the rates of morbidity and malnutrition continue to fall--as they have since 2004--the USG will need to track the work of this committee to ensure that life-saving assistance reaches the thousands of conflict-affected people in Darfur. The UN remains optimistic that the Communiqué is resolving some impediments to humanitarian assistance, and the international community must remain vigilant in monitoring the Sudanese Government's compliance with its commitments in the March 28 agreement.
FERNANDEZ